

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 01334 200851Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 /060 W
-----200853Z 098680 /20
R 200830Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2712

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 1334

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: PROTEST AGAINST GOC MEDIA ATTACKS

REF PRAGUE 1248, STATE 114979

1. POLCOUNS TOOK OPPORTUNITY OF BEING CALLED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY MAY 18 BY DEPUTY HEAD OF SIXTH DEPARTMENT NOVOTNY TO DISCUSS A LOCAL PROBLEM TO POINT OUT THAT EMBASSY WAS CONCERNED ABOUT RECENT EXTREMELY NEGATIVE MEDIA TREATMENT OF US AND ITS POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS ON RELATIONS. HE SAID WE WERE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED BECAUSE MEDIA LINE WAS SWINGING EVER CLOSER TO PERSONAL ATTACKS ON PRESIDENT CARTER. HE NOTED THAT WE HAD BROUGHT OUR CONCERN TO WASHINGTON'S ATTENTION (THIS WAS BEFORE RECEIPT OF STATE REFTEL). NOVOTNY TOOK NOTE OF STATEMENT.

2. POLCOUNS ALSO BROUGHT UP INCIDENT OF PROFESSOR MILNE HOLTON, WHO ARRIVED IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER AUSPICES OF USIS AND CZECH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO LECTURE ON POETRY MAY 14. BORDER AUTHORITIES AT PRAGUE AIRPORT (APPARENTLY POLICE, NOT CUSTOMS) HELD HIM FOR TWO AND ONE HALF HOURS WHILE THEY SEARCHED ALL HIS BAGGAGE, GIVING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO LECTURE MATERIALS AND BOOKS. HOLTON WAS ALLOWED ONE TELEPHONE CALL TO EMBASSY AND WAS NOT PUT IN TOUCH WITH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OFFICIAL AT AIRPORT TO
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GREET HIM. POLCOUNS POINTED OUT THAT AUTHORITIES OBVIOUSLY HAD RIGHT TO SEARCH ANYONE NOT UNDER DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY, BUT THAT THIS SORT OF TREATMENT OF A WELL-KNOWN STUDENT OF POETRY VISITING CZECHOSLOVAKIA AT INVITATION OF A GOVERNMENT INSTITUTION WAS DIFFICULT TO COMPREHEND. NOVOTNY CAME AS CLOSE TO AN APOLOGY AS WE HAVE HAD IN ANY RECENT INCIDENT, SAYING THAT MFA OFFICIALS WERE OFTEN UNHAPPY WITH BEHAVIOR OF BORDER AUTHORITIES, THAT HE

THOUGHT THERE HAD BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT BUT IMPROVEMENT IS A
SLOW PROCESS.
BYRNE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 20-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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